

## Show-Me Missouri's Answer

The United States Justice Department's National Institute of Corrections selected Missouri as a demonstration site for its Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TPCI). This model, based on data collected over two decades, sets out an innovative approach for state departments and community agencies to address the reentry of offenders to local communities. By retooling shared resources, TPCI proposes that states can increase public safety, close the revolving door of incarceration, diminish new victimization, and break the cycle of offenders' children becoming the next generation of offenders.

Eight Missouri state departments have partnered to strengthen offender reentry practices. This initiative creates strategies to help offenders abandon crime as a way of life.

Offenders benefit from a mutual exchange of resources, expertise and experience among the participating departments. Offenders succeed through a seamless application of supervision strategies developed as they enter prison, implemented while incarcerated, and reinforced as they return to the community. In each phase offenders are held accountable for their behavior and responsible for their actions.

This coordinated effort by state government is designed to effectively and efficiently manage a shared offender population with a variety of overlapping problems. Success in this process stands to reduce future offender dependence on state government and create safer and healthier communities for all Missourians.

## MAKING MISSOURI BETTER: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

## Show-Me Missouri's Partners

The **Missouri Department of Corrections** promotes public safety by the supervision and confinement of offenders. Our mission to reduce crime and incarceration costs to taxpayers is enhanced through the partnerships created with other state agencies.

The **Department of Economic Development** is committed to working with other agencies and our partners across the state to help offenders successfully complete the transition from prison to community; so they can move toward self-sufficiency and a productive life.

The **Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services** works to promote healthier communities. Through this partnership the department will facilitate linking offenders, who are returning home, with health resources available in their community.

The **Missouri Department of Mental Health** is heavily invested in this project. With over half of alcohol and drug abuse treatment referrals from the criminal justice system and the number of offenders who suffer from other mental disabilities, it is imperative that we work with our partners to address these significant issues.

The **Missouri Department of Social Services** believes that this partnership assists families of offenders by promoting connections during the incarceration period which will continue upon release. Offenders who develop a support system prior to release through access to services and family will experience a more successful transition to the community.

The **Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation-DVR) is a program to assist persons with physical or mental impairments to become employed. MDVR's mission is to provide the highest quality of employment-oriented services to Missourians with disabilities.

The **Missouri Department of Revenue** is implementing a program to assist offenders in obtaining a non-drivers license identification card, which will allow a smoother transition into the community. This will provide an offender the immediate possibility of proving their identity for important transitional steps such as employment, education, and financial services.

For the past several years the **Office of State Courts Administrator**, with the assistance of the judiciary, has utilized drug and family courts to hold offenders accountable and better able to refrain from further criminal behavior. Offenders who are successful upon reentry from prison will contribute to the public's safety and avoid a return to the court system.

## MISSOURI MAKES ITS MOVE *Combining State Resources to Build Healthier and Safer Missouri Communities*



The State of Missouri is taking action to stop the revolving door of incarceration for its offender population through Missouri's Reentry Process.

Eight state agencies (Corrections, Economic Development, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Social Services, Elementary and Secondary Education, Revenue and the Office of the State Courts Administrator) have joined in partnership to strategically address the family, substance abuse, mental health, employment, education, housing and health problems that perpetuate criminal behavior

This effort also aims at breaking the cycle for the children of offenders, who are six times more likely to become Missouri's next generation of offenders.

A comprehensive series of strategies have been developed by the departments based on shared data to identify and reduce the risk factors associated with recidivism in Missouri.

Through this unique partnership an individual transition accountability plan creates a road map for offender success that results in safer and healthier communities.

## Show-Me How This Works

*How do we increase productivity, create healthier communities and better protect the public from crime?*

By combining resources, talents and information of the participating state agencies, specific offender problem areas addressed by these agencies can be better focused for strategic results.

*Why should other Departments involve themselves with criminal behavior?*

Corrections data demonstrates that criminal offenders have a variety of problems, such as family issues, substance abuse addictions, mental health concerns, and employment stability, which require the services of agency experts in addressing these issues.

Coordination among participating departments reduces duplication of services and increases overall efficiency.

*Is this just another program to coddle criminals?*

This partnership will hold offenders responsible for their behavior and accountable for their actions from the day they enter prison through release and community supervision. Through the combined efforts of the participating agencies, an offender is required to develop a transition accountability plan to accomplish what is needed to succeed upon release. There are sanctions for those who fail to follow their plans.

This partnership also seeks to break the inter-generational cycle of incarceration among offender mothers, fathers and their children.

## Show-Me the Data

### Prison Data

- \* Last year Missouri sent 18,000 people to prison.
- \* Last year Missouri released 17,545 people from prison.
- \* Over 97% of the people in prison today will someday be released. The vast majority of offenders return to the counties where they lived prior to incarceration.
- \* About 33% of the people sent to prison were parole violators.

### Mental Health and Substance Abuse Data

- \* Over half of Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse treatment admissions are criminal justice referrals.
- \* In one year 40.2% of Missouri prison admissions were due to alcohol (8.8%) and drug offenses (31.4%).
- \* Over 75% of offenders with serious mental health problems return to prison within five years of release.
- \* Data concerning Missouri offenders demonstrates that continuity of substance abuse treatment starting in prison and continuing upon release promotes public safety.
- \* Of all those who return to prison for a new conviction, 31% involve new drug convictions and 16% new DWI convictions.
- \* During a five month period, over 50% of offenders admitted to prison required substance abuse treatment unavailable in prison.

### The Importance of Employment and Education

- \* About 54% of offenders returned to prison within one year of release did not have full-time employment.
- \* Only 14% of those returned to prison had full-time employment.
- \* Offenders who increase their vocational skills while incarcerated return to prison within five years at a rate less than half of those who do not - 25% to 58%.
- \* About 55% of offenders without a high school diploma or GED return to prison. For those with a high school diploma or a GED, the rate is about 40% after five years.

### The Role of the Family

- \* Last year 51% of male offenders and 80% of female offenders reported they had dependent children in the community.
- \* That statistic translates to 35,468 dependent children with a parent in prison.
- \* Ten percent of all children participating in Head Start programs have a parent in prison.
- \* Children with incarcerated parents are six times more likely to become incarcerated themselves.
- \* Continued contact with family during and following incarceration can reduce recidivism.